

Mission Field.

A BIBLE-CLASS AT TRICHINOPOLY.

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(S. P. G. Mission Field—April.)

CONTINUED

With many, salvation is to be obtained by mere works—e.g., mental abstraction, subduing the flesh by fasts and austerities; with this idea, one of them asked our Principal, when he was addressing the class, "What do you want us to do?" He was told that he must not merely think of what he must do, he must also hear what God has done for him. This set him thinking, and when Mr. Dodson had left the man confessed to me that he never viewed the subject in that light. I told him he must not rely too much on himself, and that he must ever be ready to say, "Spoke, Lord, for Thy servant's honour." How disappointing is this heavenly teaching to the pride of the natural man!

Want of strength to bear obloquy and suffer social ostracism is another evil. "Is it necessary to be baptized and be outcasted and tear ourselves away from our dear ones?" My answer has always been in the words of our blessed Lord, "Who-soever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels" (St. Mark viii. 38). "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me" (St. Matthew x. 37).

During those three years I have found that men who in their younger days have attended some Mission schools where the Christian religion is taught invariably appreciate our preaching more than others who have not had this privilege, and the Sivite abbot who was brought by one of our old Brahman students betrayed such ignorant opposition to the reception of the Gospel message that I had to spend nearly an hour in destructive work.

Speaking one Sunday on the knowledge of God, one of my hearers, a jeweller by trade, a subtle reasoner, and a proficient in the Vedantic system, who had received from me some years ago a copy of the New Testament, asserted that to know oneself was to know God—i.e., one must come to know that one is God—which is what the Vedantist understands by the old maxim (know thyself). I told him that his doctrine was condemned by the Vishnavites, who call it *Mayavatham*—i.e., the delusion doctrine—and that

it was equally condemned in the Bible. "Ye shall be as gods" was the deceptive promise the great enemy made to our first parents. The Bible also speaks of saving knowledge, which consists in the discovery of our own sinfulness, and God's great mercy in sending His Son to save us. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (St. John xvii. 3). Very often I get people of this sort to attend my class, but I find them invariably self-opinionated.

Occasionally I have men who hold erroneous views of sin and of the nature of God. These have to be told that sin is no mere violation of laws of society, but of the laws of God; that, though God is our Father, He is also our just Judge (1 Peter i. 17), and therefore He will punish the wicked and reward the just; that popular Hinduism encourages sin; and that idolatry, now as in ancient times, is associated with impurity. A few instances—e.g., the employment of prostitutes as Temple-servants, &c.—make them open their eyes, but then they shelter themselves under the doctrine of fate, which destroys free agency and personal responsibility.

Several hundreds of people have heard the Gospel in the class, some of them for the first time. On one occasion I was surprised to find an old and well-used copy of Rhenius' translation of the New Testament in the hands of a visitor whose mind was steeped in the principles of Vedantism, and on inquiry I learnt that he had received it many years ago from one of our S.P.G. missionaries at Negapatam.

Occasionally some Mahomedan neighbor makes his appearance. The Mussulman's difficulty is the divinity of our blessed Lord. Some of them who have visited Madras had heard the Gospel message from Rev. H. D. Goldsmith of the C.M.S. Hindustani Mission; they spoke very highly of his patience and earnestness, but tried to prove from the Gospels that their Arabian prophet was the Paraclete. At the same time these iconoclasts vehemently attacked any Hindu who ventured in their presence to defend his idolatrous system. It is highly desirable that our Society should have at Trichinopoly, with its large Mahomedan population, a special missionary for these people.

(To be continued.)

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Diocese of Fredericton ** New Brunswick.

IT IS PURPOSED TO COMMEMORATE the life and labours of the late JOHN MEDLEY, D.D., FIRST BISHOP OF FREDERICTON AND METROPOLITAN OF CANADA, by erecting a Monument in the Cathedral, which he built, and by establishing a Mission Canonry in connection with the Cathedral, to be known as "THE BISHOP MEDLEY MEMORIAL CANONRY." The amount required for these two purposes is at least \$25,000.

The Committee to whom the work is entrusted feel that there are many friends of the late Bishop outside of his Diocese, who from regard to his memory and interest in the work of The Church in New Brunswick, will be disposed to assist in raising the amount above mentioned, and to those they would appeal for help.

Subscriptions, large or small, will be received by the Treasurers at St. John, N.B., or at the office of this paper. Subscriptions to the Monument may be paid at any time prior to July, 1894, and those to the Canonry may be spread over three years.

H. TULLY FREDERICTON,
Chairman of Committee.

St. John, N.B., Canada, 15th June, 1893.

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